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Japan - F. D. S.

Missionary Series.]

[No. 6.

THE
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JAPANESE DOOR.

BY
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THE
J A P A N E S E D O O R.



“THE Land of the Rising Sun” is in the eye of Christendom. Since the prayer of the two Japanese converts in Yokohama in 1872, in a prayer-meeting, where it seemed to the weeping sailors and weeping sea-captains that the cry for Japan must enter the ear of God from these sorrowing converts, there has been a “strange warming” of the Christian heart toward Japan. Ask any intelligent man where lies the field most thoroughly ready for the harvest, and he will answer, “In the Mikado’s Empire.”

St. Paul slept on the border of Asia with his face toward Europe, and his inspired zeal took on a personal form ; and he saw a man from Macedonia standing before him and saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." The thoughtful believer can hardly enter any closet of prayer anywhere in Christendom, and not see a man from Japan beckoning, and hear him say, "Come over and help us."

Japan has a territory more than three times as large as the State of New York, and a population nearly as large as that of France or of Great Britain. It is a land of peculiar interest. Its climate is not surpassed, if equaled, anywhere in the world. Its soil is not especially productive. Most of its vegetables bear foreign names, and speak of the enterprise of the people rather than of the fertility of the soil. Its endless sea-coast and countless bays and inlets and clustering islands have furnished food for a more hardy people than would otherwise be expected so far south.

Japan has gold in Salo Island. Coal and iron are quite well distributed. Sulphur

abounds. Ambergris is found on some of her shores. She enjoys the luxury of many thermal and mineral springs.

CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE.

Japan lies between America and Asia, and the character of the people holds the same position in the moral chart of the earth. A careful study of the habits, manners, customs, and laws of heathen peoples will place Japan higher up and nearer to civilization than any other distinctively heathen people. Of course, this comparison must eliminate the influence of the English rule in India, and take the natives as heathenism leaves them.

One who has inquired his way of a stranger and a native in the streets of London and of Paris, can understand the difference in politeness and gentleness of manner between the average Anglo-Saxon and the average Japanese. The Japanese are naturally polite, sympathetic, kindly, gentle, having many of the traits that give the Frenchman such a welcome into the society of the world.

Mr. E. W. Clark, long a teacher in Japan, . says of the people : " They certainly exceed us in politeness, gentleness, obedience to parents and superiors, and in social manners are our peers. They have also a culture and native refinement that surprises the foreigner, and their sense of honor is at least equal to that of the average American." Dr. Maclay cannot say too much for their sense of honor.

Mr. Griffis, in his " Mikado's Empire," (p. 569,) says :

" In moral character the average Japanese is frank, honest, faithful, kind, gentle, courteous, confiding, affectionate, filial, loyal. Love of truth for its own sake, chastity, temperance, are not characteristic virtues. A high, almost painful, sense of honor is cultivated by the Samurai. In spirit the average artisan and farmer is a sheep. In intellectual capacity the actual merchant is mean, and in moral character low. He is beneath the Chinaman in this respect. The male Japanese is far less overbearing and more chivalrous to women than any other Asiatic. In political

knowledge or gregarious ability the countryman is a baby, and the city artisan a boy. The peasant is a pronounced pagan, with superstition ingrained and dyed into the very finest fiber of his nature."

The Government seeks to act the part of a parent with a child that cannot be trusted out of sight. "The whereabouts of ninety-nine hundredths of all the citizens during any given past twenty-four hours can be told with great certainty." The Government uses this minute oversight or espionage for the protection of the good name of Japan in foreign lands. "No Japanese are ever allowed to go abroad except as responsible, competent, and respectable citizens, who will do credit to their country."

Be it remembered that Japan has been steadily opposed to slavery. Her authors condemn the crime in unsparing terms. Some Japanese coolies were sent to California and Hawaii. Among the first things done by the Mikado's Government after the Restoration was the sending of an official, who was to re-

turn with these slaves to their homes, and who did secure this result. It is not strange that the Mikado could move, as he did in June, 1872, unveiled among his people, though this had not been done by any of his predecessors for twelve hundred years, and see everywhere only signs of popular joy and receive only expressions of polite reverence. We are prepared to hear that this people venerate the memory of the artist, Nomo-no-Tsukune, who in A. D. 3 introduced into the ceremony of burying the wife and servants with the body of the deceased husband and master the custom of burying "clay images" instead of the living friends. The Japanese art was born of kindness while the Prophet of Nazareth was playing bare-footed on the hill-side back of Joseph's shop. Surely this must be unusually good ground in which to sow the seed of the kingdom.

THE DARK SIDE.

We have seen the best side of the Japanese. They put their best foot forward. But they

have a worst side. Mr. Griffis, who is so warmly and intelligently the friend of the Japanese, as seen in every page of his careful work, "The Mikado's Empire," gives us some glimpses at the darker side. He says, (page 568 :)

"The establishment of the press has also exposed the fact that in these isles of the blest, in which some foreigners supposed existed only innocence, gentleness, or good-mannered poverty, reeks every species of moral filth, abomination, crime, and corruption. To scan the columns of an average Japanese newspaper is to read a tale of horror and nastiness that puts to the blush the obscene calendars in the sensational dailies and illustrated 'Police Gazette' of New York, which find their way only too plentifully into the editorial rooms of Japanese cities. As one measure of crime in Dai Nippon, I believe the number of executions and deaths in the native prisons averages three thousand per annum. There is scarcely a form of sin known to Sodom, Greece, Rome, or India, but has been or is

practiced in Japan, which has sore need of moral renovation."

Their horrible and revolting modes of torture and punishment in the past are unequaled in the annals of any other known people. We conclude with Griffis, that "the Japanese are simply human—no better, no worse, than mankind outside." What we need, they need. The power that can regenerate and save us can regenerate and save them.

WOMAN IN JAPAN.

The test of a civilization is the treatment of woman. Find her round on the ladder, and you can count all the libraries, know all the liberties, judge all the laws, and explore all the homes, without taking another step. Measured by this standard, Japan compares well with any other heathen nation. It is true that her most influential religion, Buddhism, denies to woman a soul, except as she may, in the transmigrations of the future, appear as a man, and thus become a possible heir to heaven and immortality; yet nine of

No. 6.

her one hundred and twenty-three sovereigns have been women.

In the awakening of Japan some of her best men have defied old prejudices and are giving honor to their wives, so that they are no longer ashamed to be seen in public with them. In the Christian churches in Japan families sit together in the public congregations—a most amazing spectacle in Asia. Silk reeling machinery and a wider belt of tea-growing ground have multiplied woman's chances for self-support and her virtues. Schemes, as wide as the Empire, for the education of girls in common and high schools are received with great favor.

No woman's feet are ever bound in Japan. She has nearly as much liberty to walk and visit as in America. Chastity is quite a common virtue. But the spiritual teaching of Christ is unknown. Sin merely in the thought is an unknown idea; they apprehend it only in the outward act. There is in every home pretending to respectability what is called a "Japanese Ladies' Library," a number of

books bound together. It is something like binding together the Bible, "Ladies' Letter Writer," "Guide to Etiquette," "Hannah More," "Queens of England," and an almanac, with teachings on household economy. All this has promise for the future.

Mothers teach their children to love their country. They are patriots. The Chinese think patriotism, or interest in public affairs, almost an offense. The officers are to care for the Government. The people are indifferent. They are easily governed so long as no public peril makes the Government need the aid of the people. In emergencies this indifference is perilous. But in Japan every child is taught the heroic histories of his country. This work of instruction, which is part of a mother's duty, together with reading the "Ladies' Library," has elevated the type of Japanese women.

In exquisite taste for the beautiful and becoming in dress and personal adornment, and in the graces of etiquette and female proprieties, the women of Japan are not inferior

to the women of Western nations. Griffis says, (p. 559 :)

“No ladies excel the Japanese in that innate love of beauty, order, neatness, household adornment and management, and the amenities of dress and etiquette as prescribed by their own standard. In maternal affection, tenderness, anxiety, patience, and long-suffering, the Japanese mothers need fear no comparison. . . . As educators of their children they are peers to the mothers of any civilization in the care and minuteness of their training of, and affectionate tenderness and self-sacrificing devotion to, their offspring *within the limits of their light and knowledge.*”

With such mothers it is not difficult to believe Griffis when he says, (p. 553 :)

“The custodian of the divine regalia is a virgin priestess. The chief deity in their mythology is a woman. Japanese women, by their wit and wisdom, made their native tongue a literary language. In literature, art, poetry, song, the names of women are among the most brilliant of those on the long

roll of fame and honor on whose brows the Japanese, at least, have placed the fadeless chaplet of renown. Their memory is still kept green by recitation, quotation, reading, and inscription on screen, roll, memorial-stone, wall, fan, cup, and those exquisite works of art that delight even alien admirers, even east and west of the Pacific."

This same writer informs us that, in spite of all these noble qualities, the supreme principle in Japanese life, namely, *filial obedience*, is the snare and ruin of woman. At the command of her father she goes, without a murmur, to a life of sorrow and sin, which she loathes. She steps forward to meet every misery, and sickening degradation, and premature age, and untimely death, that her father may profit by her woe.

In this respect Japan sinks down to a level with China, and we cannot avoid thinking of the poor outcast Chinese woman who threw herself into the bay in San Francisco. When she was fished out by the police, and taken to the station, she refused to speak a word.

Finally she said, "If you have a Jesus' man, I will talk to him." The police sent for Dr. Gibson. She said to him, "You know what I am. If you send me back to this life I will jump into the bay again. *My father and mother* sold me into this life. You must not send me back to it." Dr. Gibson took her to his home, and saved her. While heathen Japan has many virtues, she has great need of Him who cleanses the very thoughts, and claims all children, girls as well as boys, for himself.

RELIGIOUS PREJUDICES IN JAPAN.

Christianity got a bad start in Japan. In the sixteenth century the Jesuits came with the first Europeans, and brought their intrigues and deceptions and falsehoods. They undertook revolution. They were exposed, defeated, and expelled. Native Christians were slain. The "foreign religion" was prohibited. "Jesu followers" were identified with rebels, thieves, and murderers. The very name of Christianity was made a syn-

onym for sin, and children were taught to trample upon the cross. It is the old story repeated in every nation—whatever the apostate Church touches she curses. Jesus is crucified continually in the house of his pretended friends.

In the heart of Tokio, the capital of Japan, is the celebrated Japan Bridge from which all the great roads of the Empire are said to be measured. It is an old hump-backed heap of fire-wood; but it is one center, near which laws and decrees were bulletined. Within a decade one would read on "Board No. 1," "The evil sect called Christians is strictly prohibited. Suspicious persons should be reported to the proper officers, and rewards will be given." Signed, Dai Jo. Kuan, March 24, April 22, 1868.

By the side of this Board No. 1 are Boards Nos. 2 and 3, on which insurrection is defined and forbidden, and "murder, arson, and robbery" are prohibited. Christianity once more dying between thieves! This is the bad start Christianity received in Japan from

the Jesuits. . Even as late as 1872 some of the Japanese students in the Bible classes said, "We are astonished to find Christianity such a good thing, so pure and exalted in its teachings. We have been taught from childhood that it is evil and corrupt."

These convictions have aided in keeping the people in their old temples, so noisy, so dirty, so holy. Pigeons, priests, and ponies, (all wanting food,) lanterns, shrines, idols, spit-balls, (prayers written, rolled up in the mouth, then thrown at the idol, to be answered if they stick,) smells, dust, dirt, nastiness, and holiness—all needing cleansing; these make up the furniture of a heathen temple. Yet it is not identified with the rapacity, treachery, and cruelty of Jesuitism. Christianity has had to confront these deep prejudices, but she is rapidly gaining the victory.

HUNGER FOR WESTERN CIVILIZATION.

Ye have heard that it hath been said by them in old time, A nation shall be born in
No. 6.

a day; verily I say unto you, this promise seems almost literally fulfilled in Japan. The signs of life are innumerable. That great human hive is stirred almost to the last drone. The honey of knowledge is being gathered from every field of the civilized world. Telegraph lines are running from Tokio to nearly every island and town in the Empire. The whistle of the iron horse is disturbing the dreams of their ancient idols. Engines, with trains loaded with Western ideas and liberties and faiths, are running from Yokohama to Tokio. They run from Kobe to Lake Bima, and are soon to reach on to Yokohama. The voice of the telephone is heard in the awakened ear of Japan. Building their own railroads, running their own engines, sending their own telegrams, managing their own Boards of Trade, the awakened Japanese are mortally to be offended to be called "Asiatic, idolatrous, and despotic." They have turned their backs on Asia, and stand with their faces toward America. They are outgrowing their idolatry, and are developing a con-

stitutional government. The stride upward has been marvelous ever since Commodore Perry opened up Japan in 1854.

EDUCATION.

The educational system of Japan is very far ahead of many of the States in our Republic, and, when completed, it will do credit to the best we have.

The Empire is divided into eight collegiate districts, in each of which there is to be a college. Each collegiate district is to have 32 academies or high schools, making 256 in all. Each academical department is to have 210 schools. Thus the Empire is being provided with 53,760 schools.

Each year the Government sends abroad for education 30 of her best young men from the colleges, to each of whom she gives \$1,600 per year. She also sends 150 from the academies, to each of whom she gives \$1,000 per year.

In the primary schools no foreign language is taught, but in the academies the student

may select any three modern languages. The administration of this system is national, not provincial ; under the control of a central department.

Children over six are compelled by law to attend school. Schools for girls are established. Teachers are selected without regard to sex. Normal schools are in the plan, and are being pushed forward. Promotion through the grades are made solely by merit.

It is not strange that this people, who have long had the energy to furnish the pirates for the Chinese waters, should now, under the impulse of such educational movements, be able to maintain 10 daily newspapers and 200 other periodicals.

NEW ENERGIES.

Bishop Wiley gives us a good look at the energies of awakened Japan. Some of the figures which he furnishes are most thrilling.

The exports of Japan in 1877 amounted to \$3,433,847, and imports, \$2,978,588. Duties are charged both ways, and nearly all the

business is in the hands of native gentlemen. The chief exports are silk, silk-worms' eggs, cocoons, ginseng, cuttle-fish, pure gold and silver coin, and rice. The principal imports are cotton yarn, cotton manufactures, blankets, manufactured iron bars, kerosene oil, sugar, woolen cloth, watches, leather, and Mexican dollars.

Japan has a postal system extending to every city and town in the Empire. She has street letter-boxes and a free delivery of mail in her cities. She has 35,545 miles of mail routes, and 3,792 post-offices. She has money-orders and postal savings-banks. She sent through her post-offices in 1877, letters, books, newspapers, etc., 47,192,286. Of this number 25,000,000 were letters, and 10,000,000 were native newspapers. It is impossible to mistake the trend of all these institutions.

CHRISTIANITY.

Christianity is receiving a large share of this spirit which she is inspiring. According to the latest authority, there are now 18 Prot-

No. 6.

estant Missionary Societies at work in Japan, besides 3 Bible Societies. The number of missionaries, mostly ordained, 123, (including the wives of missionaries, 176;) native preachers and helpers, 182; communicants, 2,912; schools, 31; scholars, 1,525. In many of the public schools, also, the Bible is the adopted text-book on morals; and often the students will say to the teacher, "Sir, these are golden truths, and we thank you for them;" or, "Sir, please teach us to pray by ourselves."

Even in the midst of their religious ceremonies they will often stop to hear the Gospel. In the Cyana mountain a demon is supposed to dwell which works all harm to crops and flocks and all industries. Occasionally a grand public demonstration is made to drive away evil spirits and appease the serpent. The Rev. Mr. Ballagh, who built in 1874 the first Christian church in Japan, on one of his journeys encountered one of these demonstrations. It was a long procession, dragging a huge cart, loaded with a pagoda-shaped

tower decorated with flags and streamers, in which were dancing men wearing hideous masks. Upon the approach of the missionary the procession halted, and the drums ceased beating, and Mr. Ballagh gave them a Gospel sermon on the old serpent, and on the seed of the woman. Many were deeply interested in this good word.

Sometimes a missionary has gone to a Buddhist temple and preached Jesus till the worshipers would turn from their idols to listen, and even the priests would go to inquire of the missionary about this new hope.

The Spirit that prepares the way for the missionary, and gives his word such power that it does not return void, has gone out into that "Land of the Rising Sun." One young man walked four hundred miles to come to our school in Yakohama. He became a bright student. He had been converted, and called of God to the work of the ministry. He will make a good itinerant.

Another young man saw in a native paper
No. 6.

the advertisement of our school, and walked one hundred and fifty miles to enter the school. He pays his own way. He has touched the hem of the garment. He has seen him who met Paul in the desert near Damascus, and is preaching powerfully during his vacations.

One man of the military class, somewhat advanced in years, becoming dissatisfied with what he took to be mistakes on the part of the Government, started for his province for the purpose of stirring up insurrection. On the way he came to a place where there were Japanese Christians. Thinking that the new doctrine would aid his purposes, he began to attend their services and study the Bible. He soon saw his mistake, and was converted. He now devotes himself and his property to the work of preaching the Gospel, and is still preaching at his own expense.

A native Missionary Society has been organized by the Presbyterians. The Japanese Christians, believing it to be their duty to give as freely as they have received, have set

apart two of their own number, and put them under nominal appointment as missionaries to Corea. This land has recently been opened to European intercourse by the efforts of Japan, when all other powers had failed. This is the spirit of which Japan is begotten, for the first \$1,000 for the first Protestant church in Japan was given by the converts from heathenism in the Sandwich Islands.

CALLS FROM CITIES.

This spirit, manifested by these exceptional individuals, extends to cities. Great centers of population, where the people are massed by the hundred thousand, and where we have no missionary to point to the Lamb of God, are inviting our Superintendent to send them some men to teach their schools and preach the word of life. Many of these calls are made in vain.

Nagoya, the fourth city in the Empire, an ancient stronghold of Buddhism, situated at the head of the Owari Bay, an important port of trade, chief city of the ancient Owari

country—almost a sacred city, so high does it stand in the esteem of the people—is asking for a teacher, and offering strong inducements. The people are enterprising and industrious, and have influence in the politics of Japan. About fifteen years ago the local authorities and the people began to move in the work of education. They established a medical school, and put it in the care of a German. They also opened a high school, and employed an American to manage it. These schools have prospered till very recently. Owing to financial pressure, the foreign teachers have been discontinued. Applications, frequent and earnest, have been made to Dr. Maclay, our Superintendent in Japan, to send a missionary who can take charge of the English department of the school. He will be at perfect liberty to conduct missionary work. The school authorities will furnish him a home and pay from \$600 to \$800 of his salary. They want a married man and his wife. The Western family ideas are no bar in Japan. The cost of a man and his wife

would not be more than \$500 or \$600 beyond this offer of the native authorities.

The above is one specimen out of many. Hamamatsu, with its 150,000 inhabitants, Matsushiro, and other great cities offer conditions essentially as promising. In all of these cities the Japanese have organized schools in the Japanese language, and they desire a foreign teacher for the English department. They will give him full opportunity for mission work. Up to this time there is no Protestant work organized in any of these places, and our own society has been unable to enter these doors because we had neither the money nor the men.

From Hirosaki comes a most pitiful cry. This is a city of 40,000 inhabitants. It is in the northern part of Japan, 400 miles north of Yokohama. In this city a school was established in 1872 by an old Daimio, a sort of feudal duke. Five young men came from this school to Indiana Asbury University, four of whom are still in their studies there, one having died. At times 400 students have

been gathered at this center. It is chiefly patronized by the military or aristocratic class. It has both a high school and a medical school. Down to the present hour we have not been able to take and hold these places.

Such doors can hardly be duplicated in all human history. It seems too bad that for the lack of a few dollars these magnificent opportunities should pass away! May God send us help!

NOW OR NEVER.

These doors will not always remain open. Romanism, which is baptized heathenism, is crowding forward with all her energy. She knows that these centers are forts, and that the party that gains possession first is sure to control the country.

The Greek Church, which is only a little better than the Roman Church, has in this field and in China its only Foreign Missions; and it is pushing its work with all the zeal of a new experience. Skeptical and atheistic

teachers are crowding into the public schools. Thus they are poisoning even the heathen mind.

People have broken away from their old dead faith, and they must have something to put in the place of it. Japan will be won by somebody. She is now empty, swept, and garnished. If we keep the Master away, seven spirits worse than heathenism itself will enter in, and the last state of this great, heroic, enterprising people will be worse than the first.

Japan is calling over the sea. We must make answer. By and by we must hand in our answer for inspection in the great day. As we are prospered let us give. This great Asiatic nation has an especial regard for us. Let us not disappoint them! They ask for bread, let us not give them a stone.

No. 6.

John St. (12)